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**Liesl Clark – President, Michigan Energy Innovation Business Council**
**SB 637 Testimony – 5/29/18**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, good morning and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak here today. My name is Liesl Clark and I am the president of the Michigan Energy Innovation Business Council, and I am here on behalf of our members to ask that you support Senate Bill 637.

As we've already heard, Senate Bill 637 will pave the way for small cell technology here in Michigan, which will bolster the wireless networks serving our communities.

This will benefit consumers and businesses throughout the state, but from my perspective, the most significant benefit of Senate Bill 637 will manifest itself in the long term and will help enable advanced energy technologies across the state.

Small cells will serve as the backbone of the 5G networks of the not-so-distant future. In addition to faster speeds and better connections, 5G will usher in transformational change and innovation, fundamentally changing the way we live, work and interact.

The 5G evolution will also change our energy and transportation sectors. It will enable more connected, autonomous vehicles, many of which will be electrified. It will allow advanced grid modernization and better use of the smart meters that Michigan's utilities have deployed across the state. And it will allow us to better provide the right type of energy to fit specific needs on the grid.

We're already seeing some of these things come to fruition. More and more devices are being produced that can connect to the internet, and it goes beyond computer and phones. TVs, refrigerators, cars, washing machines, you name it. If it has an on/off switch or can be plugged into the wall, it can and will be connected. This means that customers will be able to participate in future demand response programs without wasting time thinking about when their refrigerator is defrosting or when overnight their electric vehicle is charging. This better load management will mean that utilities need to produce less electricity to begin with. Customers will be the biggest winners – saving money by using less electricity and by paying less for capital investments in power plants.

This technology will also enable a more connected, autonomous, electrified transportation future. Michigan is a leader in the testing of automated vehicles – and even though we may not be at the point of fully self-driving cars, connected vehicles with some automated features are much safer and will help to reduce crashes. Automated cars may also help provide mobility to the elderly and disabled.

It's clear to me that these advances are enabled by small cell technology. We need to create an environment that encourages telecom providers to invest in this kind of technology if we hope to enjoy this kind of future. Small cell technology will help provide the runway for Michigan's advanced energy industry to continue innovating, saving customers money and modernizing the grid.

Thank you.